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January 27, 2004

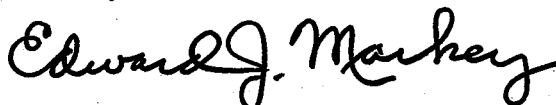
The Honorable Michael Wynn  
Acting Under Secretary of Defense, Acquisition, Technology and Logistics  
Department of Defense 3010 Defense Pentagon  
Washington DC, 20301-3010

Dear Under Secretary Wynn:

I am enclosing for you review a letter I have written together with the Natick Soldier Systems Center Business Alliance and the MetroWest Chamber of Commerce and endorsed by over 120 business and academic leaders as well as local and state public officials. Community support for the Natick Soldier Systems Center is wide and deep, and we trust that our comments on the preliminary Base Realignment and Closure Criteria will be helpful to you as you contemplate making changes.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment and look forward to working with you during this process as it evolves.

Sincerely,



EDWARD J. MARKEY  
Member of Congress

cc: Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld

# **Natick Soldier Systems Center Business Alliance MetroWest Chamber of Commerce**

January 27, 2004

The Honorable Michael Wynn  
Acting Under Secretary of Defense, Acquisition, Technology and Logistics  
Department of Defense 3010 Defense Pentagon  
Washington DC, 20301-3010

Dear Under Secretary Wynn:

Now that the preliminary Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC) criteria have been published, we would like to express our concern that they appear to be essentially unchanged from previous BRAC rounds. As a result, they do not reflect the demands of today's modern fighting forces for the kind of continual technological innovation, research and development carried out in such facilities as the Soldier Systems Center in Natick, Massachusetts (Natick Labs).

Secretary Rumsfeld has made it clear that a high-tech, efficient, and mobile military is the future of our Armed Forces and the goal of the upcoming BRAC process. The Soldier Systems Center is the epicenter in developing equipment, technology, and life-saving gear for the soldier of the future. The Soldier Systems Center embodies the publicly-stated goals of force transformation and improved jointness.

Nevertheless, the draft criteria and the commentary that accompanies them suggests that little has changed from previous BRAC rounds, which valued physical size, condition, and cost of the facility's operation very highly. While these criteria are important for large bases that house massive military equipment, personnel, and carry out environmentally specific (i.e. Naval bases near ports) or space intensive missions (i.e. Air Force bases with copious airspace), they do not account for the highly-specialized and multi-pronged missions that technical facilities must carry out to advance *their* military missions.

The Soldier Systems Center boasts a well-educated, technically-trained workforce, hundreds of higher education institutions and corporations surrounding it, and a unique opportunity to further advance its cross-service mission of protecting American soldiers around the world. We had expected the BRAC criteria would reflect the tremendous shift from brute force in the form of missile batteries and tanks to a more sophisticated, high-technology force that is mobile - employing fewer soldiers with lighter, stronger equipment, better protections and clothing, and advanced weapons and intelligence devices. From Combat Casualty Care that can sense a soldier's ailments and injuries, to parachutes for precision entry, to chemical protective shelters and clothing, to healthier meals-ready-to-eat for performance enhancement, to the Joint Protective Air Crew Ensemble, the Soldier Systems Center at Natick is the home of the American soldier of the future.

Letter to The Honorable Michael Wynn  
January 27, 2004  
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As elected officials, business people, and community leaders who all care deeply about the security of our country, we want to work with you to ensure that our soldiers are always prepared to prevail at any time, anywhere, and in any battle field conditions. That is the mission of the Soldier Systems Center at Natick, and we are proud to support this facility and the people who contribute to that mission so critical to keeping America safe.

Sincerely,

Edward J. Markey  
Member of Congress  
Massachusetts 7<sup>th</sup> District

Ginny Allan, Executive Director,  
Natick Soldier System Center  
Business Alliance

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